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# Scandinavian Studies

VOLUME 18

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## REPETITION OF METAPHORS IN TEGNÉR'S POETRY

ALBERT MOREY STURTEVANT

*University of Kansas*

IN SUNDRY previous articles I have in a desultory way pointed out many examples of the repetition of Tegnér's favorite metaphors. Such examples, unless they have received incomplete treatment, will be excluded from this discussion. Furthermore, some of Tegnér's metaphors which are repeated in his poetry (e.g., those pertaining to the sun, light, the temple, etc.) require such a lengthy discussion that they must be left as special topics for future investigation. The purpose of the present paper is to co-ordinate and analyze those metaphors which, under the arbitrary limitations imposed, reoccur in Tegnér's poetry, with a view towards arriving at a better and clearer appreciation of his poetic genius. Many of these metaphors are not repeated in exactly the same words—they may also appear in the form of similes—but in all examples the poetic concept is either identical or essentially the same with a slight variation in wording or in application. Not all these metaphors are original, but whether original or not, they all reveal Tegnér's peculiar characteristics as a poet, his poetic imagination, and, above all, his sense of artistic propriety. The very fact that he repeated these metaphors indicates that they were to him particularly attractive and appropriate. No hard and fast line of demarkation can be drawn between the various types of these metaphors, but the evidence shows that they most frequently occur in his elegiac poetry. This circumstance is in part due to the fact that I have here arbitrarily excluded his metaphors of light and of the sun, which have reference to the brighter aspects of life. However, in order to present the semblance of an orderly outline I have arranged the material under two general headings, viz., I. *Meta-*

*phors of an Elegiac Character*, and II. *Miscellaneous Metaphors*. In some instances it is doubtful which category is the more appropriate for the metaphor in question.

### I. *Metaphors of an Elegiac Character*

#### (1) *Immortality*

One of the most beautiful concepts of immortality is revealed through Tegnér's metaphor "ett odödligt hopp." This "immortal hope" survives death and, like an angel, wings its way up from the grave into heaven; as he says in his poem *Vid invigningen af Gårdsby kyrka* (1837):

och himlalöften och odödligt hopp<sup>1</sup>  
gå som en morgon öfver grafven opp.

and in his funeral poem to *Fru M. Meck* (1842):

se, då flyger utur grafven  
ett odödligt hopp  
pråktigt mot sin himmel opp.

This metaphor sometimes appears in a slightly varied form, viz., "a higher hope" ("ett högre hopp"); cf., e.g., his funeral poem *Till en far som förlorat tre barn* (1804), in which he comforts this bereaved father with the assurance of immortality:

Och en sida, än ej läsen  
utaf lifvets bok, slås opp,  
och du läser, och ditt väsen  
andas med ett högre hopp.

The two expressions for the same metaphor occur in conjunction with each other in his funeral poem to *K. L. Beckfriis* (1834), where Tegnér likens the hope of immortality to "a flower that blossoms within a withered heart":

så snart ett högre, ett odödligt hopp  
uti förvissnadt hjerta blommor opp. . .

It is clear from the repetition of this metaphor "ett odödligt hopp" (with its slight variation) that it appealed to Tegnér as peculiarly fitting for the expression of that hope which neither

<sup>1</sup> Italicized words quoted from Tegnér's poetry are mine throughout this discussion, except where otherwise designated.

science nor logic can ever stifle within the heart of man, a conception in harmony with Tegnér's own ideal that religion is fundamentally an instinctive impulse,<sup>2</sup> however much it may be affected by reason, training, or environment.

## (2) *Death*

The somber side of death receives particular attention in connection with repeated metaphors. Tegnér's native tendency to melancholia, enhanced by a vivid poetic imagination, found a most fitting means for expression in depicting the gruesome aspects of death.

For the inevitability of death Tegnér frequently employs the metaphor of "The Grim Reaper," whose scythe no mortal can escape. Thus, in his funeral poem to *J. Beckfriis* (1822) Death swings his scythe, mowing down indiscriminately both the good and the bad:

det usla frodar sig, det härliga förgår,  
och län svänges blindt af vensterhändta dösen.

And in *Den vise* (1804) Time mows down even the heavenly bodies with his scythe:

Tiden, grånande, sin ban fullbordar,  
tills han målet för sin ringdans ser.  
Skörden utaf solar och af jordar  
mejas mogen af hans län ner.

And in *Resignationen* (1808) he admonishes man to preserve that peace of soul which defies Time, however deadly his scythe is wielded:

Frid, i ert bröst, frid, dödlige, med tiden!  
*Hur siltigt och hans län går*  
fram öfver eder skörd, så hoppens dock och liden,  
och plocken ax i mejarns spår!

From the repetition of this traditional metaphor we may infer that Tegnér was impressed with the vivid poetic picture portrayed through this gruesome personification of death.

One dark aspect of death which above all seems to have im-

<sup>2</sup> Cf. his address *På Vexjö gymnasium* (1828): "... det vida väsentligare elementet i all religion, dess egentliga lifsprincip, som är själfva den inre, barnsliga, förtröstansfulla känslan af det gudomliga."

pressed Tegnér is its absolute insensibility to human grief. The personification of death as a being utterly devoid of sympathy and mercy is vividly portrayed through the *silence* of the grave; the appealing voice of humanity receives no response, for death cannot speak. This conception of silence as one of the most cruel characteristics of death occurs repeatedly throughout Tegnér's verse and in most instances in contrast with the voice of the living, revealing one of Tegnér's most effective means for enhancing the pathos of his poetic sentiment, viz., contrast.<sup>3</sup> This device is apparent in his funeral poem to *G. W. Gestrich* (1806), where he says:

Fåfängt, fåfängt, intet svar,  
grafven ingen tunga har.

and again, in the canto "Frithiof på sin faders hög" of his *Frithiofs saga* (1825), where Frithiof beseeches his dead father to speak words of comfort from the grave:

Har grafven ingen tunga? För en klinga  
den starke Angantyr ur högen qvad.

Ej svar, ej tecken för din son i nöden  
du eger, fader! O, hur arm är döden!

and again, in his funeral poem to *E. Rosenblad* (1806):

Ack! när solen utur böljan stiger,  
när hon rinner uti böljan ner,  
ropar du hans namn. Men grafven tiger,  
eko svarar dig—och ingen mer.

and again, in *Klosterruinerna* (1820), where he contemplates the life that once dwelt within the silent walls of this ancient cloister:

Hvem svarar? Ack! blott lifvet klaga vet,  
och smärtans tecken i sitt våld det eger.  
I grafven torkar ögat ut, som gret,  
och intet öra hör hvad döden säger.

It is interesting to note that even in his love poem to Anna Myhrman, *Till en frånvarande* (1805), Tegnér employs the same

<sup>3</sup> Cf. my article "Certain Aspects of Tegnér's Poetic Art," *Scandinavian Studies*, Vol. XVII (1943), pp. 210-211.



metaphor when he speaks to her beloved portrait but receives no response to his words of affection:

jag går till ditt porträtt, men det ej tröstar mig;  
det är som grafven tyst och hör ej hvad jag säger.

Here Tegnér infuses into his erotic poetry a salient feature of his elegiac verse.<sup>4</sup>

In his beautiful funeral poem *Vid en borgarflickas graf* (1804) he laments the death of the ancient virtues of the Swedish race, as exemplified by this simple burgher maiden, and completes the picture by depicting both humanity and the grave as "deaf," a conception in harmony with the "silence" of the grave impervious to human grief:

Forndygd, med dess allvar, är begravnen,  
tidens ande är så svag, så trång:  
döf är människan, och döf är grafven;—  
tystna, skaldmö, med din enkla sång!

But not all Tegnér's metaphors in connection with death represent its gruesome aspects: many reveal the tender emotions of the spirit and are beautiful in their conception. Death is particularly pathetic when a young life is cut short, and for the expression of this tender emotion Tegnér uses the symbol of "the lily broken too soon." Thus, in his funeral poem *Till friherrinnan Martina von Schwerin* (vid hennes dotters död, 1839) he says of the dead child:

Hon dog som ung. Hvad bättre kan man göra?

Farväl, sof lugnt, till jordens hjerta sluten,  
du hvita lilja uti förtid bruten!

and in *Nattvardsbarnen* (1820) the priest says to the children:

"Nästa söndag, hvem vet, kanske jag hvilar i grafven,  
kanske någon af er, en lilja bruten i förtid,  
sänker sitt hufvud till jord . . ."

This metaphor of "the broken lily," as symbolic of premature death, is hardly appropriate to maturity. Hence, in his funeral poems dedicated to mature persons Tegnér substitutes for "the broken lily" the simile of "the broken lyre" or of "the mutilated

<sup>4</sup> Cf. my article "Some Critical Notes on Tegnér's Poetry," *Scandinavian Studies*, Vol. XVII (1943), pp. 244-247.

torso," according to the appropriate individual. For instance, in his funeral poem to *David Asperlin* (1821), who had thrice been honored by the Swedish Academy for his lyric verse, the dead poet is likened to a "broken lyre":

... *Lik en splittrad lyra*  
du ligger der, och himlens melodier  
ha slumrat in uti de brustna strängar,  
och allt är tyst och öde.

A slight variation of this simile occurs in his poem *I biskopinnan Faxes minnesbok* (*Vid författarens afresa från Lund*, 1826), where in his grief over the separation he compares his soul to "a broken lute":

Ack! den glädjen är förbi omsider;  
som en brusten luta är min själ,  
kan ej klinga som i forna tider,  
kan blott sucka ett farväl, farväl!

On the other hand, in his funeral poem to *Nils Trolle* (1827) Tegnér likens the beautiful life of the departed to "the artist's torso, beautiful but mutilated":

Men nu är din lefnad lik den store  
*konstnärns torso*, kraftig, skön som den,  
ack, men *stympad*!

Here the simile of an arrested life receives an artist's setting: the beautiful statue of life becomes a mutilated torso, just as the poet's lyre is shattered and the lily of childhood is broken off by the cruel hand of death.

Another repeated metaphor in connection with death is the symbol of "the turtle dove." The cooing of this gentle bird symbolizes the words of love which are wafted up over the grave as the bird wings its flight heavenward, carrying with her the tender memories of the past—hence, she is "the turtle dove of memory," as Tegnér says in his funeral poem to his beloved teacher *L. P. Munthe* (1807):

Säkert minnets *turturdufa*  
flyger öfver grafvens rand,  
döden löser ej de ljufva  
sammanstämda själers band.

<sup>4</sup> The lyre as the symbol of the art of poetry is perhaps the most frequently repeated of all Tegnér's metaphors (cf. especially *Afsked till min lyra*).

In *Resignationen* he again defies death by urging "the turtle dove of memory" to remain seated on his shoulder:

Sitt på min axel än, du minnets turturduva,  
och kuttra i de dödas land!

(3) *The Sea*

Metaphors of the sea are of frequent occurrence in Tegnér's poetry. As a true son of the North, Tegnér delighted in the beauty of the sea and in its wild fury (cf. especially the canto "Frithiof på hafvet" of his *Frithiofs saga*). The sea is an element to be conquered, a dangerous foe who cannot be subdued without courage and patience. The sea also offers a harbor where man may find protection and peace. Hence, the sea afforded Tegnér many comparisons with life and death. When connected with the gentler aspects of life, these metaphors are not of a purely elegiac character, but they are so intimately associated with the conception of death that they cannot be kept strictly apart from the latter. For instance, in his poem to his grandparents, *Till farmor och mormor* (1824), he compares life's journey to a voyage over the sea: his grandparents have already safely reached their port, but he himself has only just started out on the war with the waves and the storm:

Snart, I gamla, öfver vreda vågor  
nalkens I den långa seglings slut,  
och inunder aftonrodnas lågor  
tryggt I ankren vesterut.

Men *min*<sup>6</sup> resa börjar. Jag skall draga  
ut bland böljornas och stormens krig.  
På den långa färden låt mig taga  
er välsignelse med mig!

The metaphor of the safe arrival of life's ship over the stormy seas again appears in his funeral poem to *K. L. Beckfriis*, in which he likens death to "life's quiet anchoring place":

Tro mig! de döde äro icke fjärran,—  
de sväfva kring oss som en fläkt från Herran  
och vagga fram oss, mellan böljors krig,  
*till lifvets stilla ankarplats*,—till sig.

<sup>6</sup> The italics are Tegnér's.

So likewise in *Fridsörter* (1808), Tegnér likens death to "the quiet sea":

Ack, du vet ej, hvar du landar  
ifrån dödens stilla haf. . . .

Again, in *Nattvardsbarnen* he pictures "Innocence" ("oskuld") as sleeping quietly upon the ship of life, unconscious of the stormy sea round about:

. . . på lifvets brusande vågor  
gungar hon trygg, hon märker dem ej, hon sover i skeppet.

The tragedy of life is also reflected in the metaphors of the sea. For instance, in the canto "Afskedet" of his *Frithiofs saga* Ingeborg likens her misfortune to "the shipwreck of destiny":

Var vis, min Frithiof, låt oss vika för  
de höga nornor, låt oss rädda ur  
vårt ödes skeppsbrott dock ännu vår ära!

And when Frithiof is about to forsake her, she likens the clouds (the symbol of disaster)<sup>7</sup> to "heaven's viking ships"—a particularly appropriate metaphor here, since Frithiof is about to embark upon a viking expedition:

och himlens långskepp, molnen, skola ta  
om bord en klagan från den öfvergifna.

## II. Miscellaneous Metaphors

As stated in my prefatory remarks, there can be no strict line of demarkation drawn between metaphors of an elegiac character and those which are not, for the same metaphor may be used for both types. For instance, when Tegnér describes a weather-beaten object as "moss-covered," this metaphor may have reference to the grave or to the remains of the departed or to any picturesque object, such as the ruins of an ancient cloister. Such metaphors are here included under the heading of "miscellaneous" because they have a miscellaneous application.

Many of Tegnér's metaphors are taken from nature. One of these is connected with the highly picturesque setting of the chase (compare his vivid description of the royal chase in the

<sup>7</sup> For the clouds as symbolic of approaching disaster compare *Axel* (1822):

Se, Axel, öfver månen far  
ett moln; när det försvunnit har,  
då är jag död. . . .

canto "Frithiofs frestelse" of his *Frithiofs saga*). In his poem *Nyårsklagen* (1807) he likens the wounded spirit of the age to a bird "shot down to earth, with bloody breast and shattered wings":

*och med blodigt bröst, med skjutna vingar  
sjunker tidens ande ner igen.<sup>8</sup>*

And in *Sången* (1817), where he describes the destruction of the universe, he likens the death of time to "an eagle shot down with broken wings":

*och den flygande tid,  
lik en vingskjuten örn,  
faller död der bredvid.*

And in the canto "Frithiofs återkomst" of his *Frithiofs saga* Ingeborg, who has concealed her suffering from Frithiof, is likened to "the wounded water fowl that dives to the bottom of the waters and there bleeds to death":

*Som vattenfågeln med såradt bröst  
till botten dyker; det är hans tröst,  
att dagen icke i såret glöder,  
på botten ligger han och förblöder:  
så hennes smärta i natt sjönk ned,  
jag ensam vet hvad den starka led.*

Another picturesque metaphor taken from nature is the description of ancient ruins (especially the grave or the remains of the departed) as "moss-covered." This conception of "moss-covered" ruins not only presents the picturesque beauty of the hand of time but it also serves as a symbol for that inexorable element which decides the fate of man. For instance, in *Svea* (1811), where he laments the death of the ancient heroes of the Swedish race, who now lie buried in oblivion, he says:

*I ädle, mossor gror på edra glömda ben,  
er lefnads hjeltedikt är slutad länge se'n.*

<sup>8</sup> Cf. the slight variation of this metaphor in his poem *Georg Adlersparres skugga till svenska folket* (1839), where he compares the degenerate spirit of the age to a bird without wings, unable to fly:

*Hvad stort och ädelt är, hvad ärofullt,  
det måste ner, det måste ner i gruset,  
ty ingen flygt förstår ett vinglöst släkte,  
och allt, som stiger, är dess svurna ovän.*

a picture which reoccurs in *Karl XII* (1818), where he laments the death of this Swedish king, who exemplified the ancient virtues of his race:

Se, nattens stjernor blossa  
på grafven länge se'n,  
och hundraårig moss  
betäcker hjeltens ben.

So too the hand of time is laid upon the ruins of those objects which once served life and its activities. For instance, in his poem *Vid invigningen af Gårdsby kyrka (Från predikstolen)* he pictures the ruins of this church, in centuries to come, as having "moss over its brow":

och när århundraden, som icke stanna,  
ha strött sin moss  
öfver templets panna. . .

Here the word "panna" connotes the personification of the church as an attribute of man's spiritual life. Again, in *Klosterruinen* he pictures "Superstition" ("vantrö") sitting upon "a moss-covered stone bench," as a symbol of the spirit which once dwelt within these ancient ruins:

På denna mossbetäckta stenbänk satt,  
i skygd af dessa sekelgamla ekar,  
hon kanske också mången människensnatt  
och mindes gråtande sin barndoms lekar.

Another metaphor connected with nature is the comparison of the art of poetry to "the perfume of flowers." In *Det eviga* (1810) Tegnér emphasizes the eternal nature of poetry: poetry is not like "the perfume of the flowers" or the colors of the rainbow upon the sky, for the beauty that is poetry's is not evanescent, but permanent and eternal:

Och dikten är icke som blommornas doft,  
som färgade bågen i skyar.  
Det sköna, du bildar, är mera än stoft,  
och åldern dess anlet förnyar.\*

\* Cf. a similar conception in *Romresan* (1817):

Uti från kan allt ej komma,  
i hans inre måste blomma  
dess gestalt.

In his poem *Ättehögen* (1816), on the other hand, this "perfume of the flowers" symbolizes the transient nature of poetry, for poetry is only the expression of life, which ends at the grave:

Sången, konsten är blott blomstrens doft,  
för minuten födt på grafvars stoft.  
All vår glädje här i mulden  
är ett lusthus, byggt på ättekullen.

Here Tegnér reverts to the spirit of *Mjeltsjukan*, so that he uses the same metaphor as in *Det eviga* to express the opposite conception, a contradiction characteristic of Tegnér.

Another metaphor, not taken from nature, which repeatedly occurs in Tegnér's poetry, is the representation of the spiritual and moral qualities of man as revealed upon his "brow"; man carries on his brow the outward sign of his inner life. The classic example of this "sign upon the brow" occurs in *Mjeltsjukan*:

Du himlabarn! hos dig det enda sanna  
är kainsmärket, inbrändt på din panna.

a conception which reoccurs in "Frithiofs återkomst," where Frithiof suspects Ingeborg of faithlessness:

En dikt jag minnes om Balders Nanna,  
men sanning fins ej på mensklig panna. . . .

On the other hand, the beautiful qualities of the soul are likewise revealed upon man's brow. For instance, in his poem to his brother *Elof Tegnér* (1815) he says:

Hur stod du icke, mig en föresyn,  
med tankens allvar på den höga pannan,  
det klara allvar, som kan le jämväl. . . .

And of the venerable Bishop Wallin, the father of Swedish church music, he says (*Johan Olaf Wallin*, 1839):

Han stod med himlens stormar på sin panna,  
med himlens tordön i sitt djupa bröst.

Just as Cain carried on his brow the branded mark of an infamous deed, so Elof Tegnér and Bishop Wallin reveal upon their brows the mark of the spirit within. The same metaphor occurs in *Nattvardsbarnen*, where Tegnér expresses his faith

in the divinity of man, for "every human being carries the sign of divinity upon his brow":

Bär ej hvar mensklig gästalt *det gudomligas tecken på pannan?*<sup>10</sup>

Another metaphor which Tegnér repeats is the conception of poetry as "conquering the world." The classic example of this metaphor occurs in his poem *Afsked till min lyra* (1840):

Vi gått på äfventyr och ha ej stannat,  
förr'n vi *eröfrat världen* med vår kraft.<sup>11</sup>

This metaphor reoccurs in his poem to *H. M. konung Karl XIV Johan* (ca. 1840), where he urges the foreign king to lay aside the sword and to "conquer the world" through cultural and intellectual pursuits:

*En värld eröfrade* vi förr med svärdet;  
med sång och tanke nu låt oss *eröfra världen!*

Obviously, we have here a blending of the biblical conception (emphasized in my article referred to in footnote 11) with the picture of the medieval knight who journeys forth to conquer the world in behalf of the ideals of chivalry. Tegnér was involved in many literary and political controversies, in which he proved his ability to defend his ideals. He himself "fought the good fight," and it is significant that in his funeral poem to *Elof Tegnér* (1815) he urges his brother to do likewise:

Vak upp, Virginias sångare, vak upp,  
du ljusets, färgernas och livets man!  
I tretti år du stridt med blanka vapen  
för smak och språk och *sång* och vett i Norden.

Here the fight to conquer through the spirit is clearly connected with the warlike spirit of the crusader. The repetition of this metaphor "eröfra världen" indicates Tegnér's ardent spirit in perpetuating his own ideals of cultural and spiritual life.

In his sermon *Prestvigningar*, No. 5 (1839), Tegnér says regarding the nature of light: "The scientists teach us that light

<sup>10</sup> Cf. his address *På Vexjö gymnasium* (1824): "Derför är barnet ett heligt ting; ty det bär *Guds ouppbrutna insegel på pannan.*"

<sup>11</sup> For the interpretation of this metaphor see my discussion in *Scandinavian Studies*, Vol. XVII (1943), pp. 238-239.



itself is of one and the same nature and colorless: but, as such, it cannot be perceived by the human eye: it must first be broken in the cloud and against the earth before it can be revealed to us in all its rich display of varied colors. So is it likewise with the light of revelation."<sup>12</sup> What Tegnér here says regarding "the light of revelation" is equally true of his own poetic genius. Just as the light of the sun is shed upon the earth in all its manifold colors, so his poetic thought sheds its rays hither and thither, revealing the hidden treasures of his artistic genius. The radiation of this resplendent light is nowhere more clearly manifested than in the repetition of these metaphors, which reveal his poetic concepts in all their varied coloring.

<sup>12</sup> "De naturkunnige lära oss, att ljuset i sig sjelft är ett och enahanda och färglöst: men som sådant kan det ej fattas af något menskligt öga; det måste förut brytas i skyn och mot jorden, och först derigenom kan det af oss förnimmas med sitt rika, sitt skiftande färgspel. Och på samma sätt är det äfven med uppenbarelsens ljus."

STRINDBERG'S 'NATURALISTISKA SORGESPEL'  
AND ZOLA'S NATURALISM

V. 'FRÖKEN JULIE': THEME, LANGUAGE, SETTING

CARL E. W. L. DAHLSTRÖM  
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THUS FAR in this series of studies we have had the opportunity to examine Strindberg's *Fröken Julie* with respect to subject and sources, *dramatis personae*, situation, and plot. In this paper I propose to analyze the play as regards theme, language, and setting, all in terms of Zola's naturalism.

*Theme*

Zola was wholly opposed to that form of didacticism in which the author interferes with the *dramatis personae* and their actions in order to point out a moral, teach a lesson, make a preachment, or prove a thesis. Indeed, when Zola discusses the characteristics of the naturalistic novel, he says: "On chercherait en vain une conclusion, une moralité, une leçon quelconque tirée des faits. . . . L'auteur n'est pas un moraliste, mais un anatomiste qui se contente de dire ce qu'il trouve dans le cadavre humain."<sup>1</sup> Individuals may conclude what they will from their readings, but the naturalistic author remains wholly impersonal in his presentation of material.

In his *Foreword* to *Fröken Julie* Strindberg raises some questions in our minds with respect to theme. He says that he has not tried to do anything in this drama that is really new, except to modernize the form according to the demands of the new men of the age. Then he says:

Och till den ändan har jag valt eller låtit mig gripas av ett motiv, som kan sägas ligga utanför dagens partistrider, emedan problemet om socialt stigande eller fallande, om högre eller lägre, bättre eller sämre, man eller kvinna, är, har varit och skall bli av bestående intresse.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Les romanciers naturalistes* (Paris, 1914), p. 129.

<sup>2</sup> August Strindberg, *Samlade skrifter* (Stockholm, 1921), Vol. XXIII, p. 100. (Hereinafter the *Samlade skrifter* will be referred to simply by volume number.)

Is this, then, a problem play? Martin Lamm would answer in the negative. He says that Strindberg's close relationship to naturalism was responsible for the absence of any tendency toward moralization in *Fröken Julie*. "Avsikten med hans drama är att bevisa en stor naturlag, alldeles som Zola gjort i *Rougon-Macquartcykeln*." Lamm says further that Strindberg discards the possibility of love between Julie and Jean, that he does not want his readers to derive such a conclusion. "Men han ville få dramat att ytterligare exemplifiera den sociala tillämpningen av Darwins lära om att det i kampen för tillvaron är de livsdugligaste elementen, som fortleva, under det att de svagare gå under."<sup>3</sup>

Lamm's two statements are not wholly in harmony with each other. Strindberg's desire to demonstrate the validity of a great natural law cannot reach fruition through the arbitrary adaptation of a law. Moreover, it is not even a law that Strindberg is adapting; rather, it is Darwin's teaching that, in the struggle for existence, the stronger survive whereas the weaker perish.

In discussing the motivation of the play, Strindberg says that by presenting so many different phases he has not been one-sided in ascribing Julie's fall to a single factor, nor has he offered merely moral preachment. With respect to the latter assertion he comments further by saying, "Detta sista har jag överlåtit åt en kokerska i brist på en präst."<sup>4</sup> This remark is doubtless nothing more than cynicism, for Kristin has nothing but conventional religious platitudes to offer to Julie.<sup>5</sup> In addition, Kristin's own life, qualified by household thefts and sex immorality, scarcely makes her a convincing preacher.

If there is any preachment intended, it is that which Strindberg indicates in this passage about consequences:

Skulden har naturalisten utstrukt med Gud, men handligens följder, straff, fängelse, eller fruktan därför, kan han icke stryka, av den enkla grund att de kvarstå, antingen han ger décharge eller icke, ty de förfördelade medmänskorna äro icke så beskedliga som de icke förfördelade utanförstående kunna vara det för gott pris.<sup>6</sup>

<sup>3</sup> *Strindbergs dramer* (Stockholm, 1924), Vol. I, pp. 326-327.

<sup>4</sup> XXXIII, p. 102.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 181-182.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 105. See also Julie's statement, p. 184.

As we read further into the *Foreword*, we note that Strindberg is rationalizing about Julie's suicide. He declares, in fact, that "... fröken Julie kan icke leva utan ära."<sup>7</sup> In actual life, the alleged model for Julie did not commit suicide. Strindberg told Edvard Brandes that the woman had taken a job as "skänkmamsell på Hasselbacken."<sup>8</sup> It seems rather strange that a naturalistic writer should find no suicide in life and yet should insist upon it in a drama, but perhaps one should interpret Strindberg's insistence on the suicide as evidence that *Fröken Julie* is a thesis drama. The author sets up the proposition that all daughters of nobility who lose their honor must die. He closes his eyes to life itself and forces suicide on the leading character.

I doubt, however, that Strindberg was writing a thesis drama. He was also doubtless thinking far more of dramatic art than of naturalism. Death is so final in resolving certain situations that it tends to grip the audience and to create in the audience the sense of action satisfactorily completed. Thus, suicide must have appealed to Strindberg as the best way to resolve the situation in *Fröken Julie*.

Frankly, one cannot make much capital out of the subject of theme in this drama. There is certainly no moral preachment involved in Kristin's utterances. Again, this is not a thesis play in which Strindberg is demonstrating that the daughters of nobility cannot live without honor. Lastly, the drama does not illustrate any scientific law. In other words, the analysis of theme in *Fröken Julie* provides no significant data pointing to the play either as naturalistic or not naturalistic.

### *Language*

Some readers would regard *Fröken Julie* as a naturalistic play because the vocabulary occasionally includes expressions supposedly tabooed in polite society. Such readers would point to the mention of catamenia,<sup>9</sup> the discussions pertaining to the bitch Diana,<sup>10</sup> and the words that Jean hurls at Julie.<sup>11</sup> These

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 106.

<sup>8</sup> *August Strindberg* (Stockholm, 1940), Vol. I, p. 346.

<sup>9</sup> XXIII, p. 124.

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 120, 122, 170, 173.

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 151, 152, 153.

expressions are, however, without genuine significance for naturalism. Zola himself would wave them aside.

Je me tue justement à répéter que le naturalisme n'est pas dans les mots, que sa force est d'être une formule scientifique.<sup>13</sup>

Une langue est une logique. On écrit bien, lorsqu'on exprime une idée ou une sensation par le mot juste. Tout le reste n'est que pompons et falbalas. Avoir l'impression forte de ce dont on parle, et rendre cette impression avec la plus grande intensité et la plus grande simplicité, c'est l'art d'écrire tout entier.<sup>13</sup>

In his *Foreword* Strindberg discusses the dialogue of *Fröken Julie*. He says:

Vad dialogen slutligen angår, har jag brutit med traditionen något, i det jag icke gjort mina personer till kateketer som sitta och fråga dumt för att framkalla en kvick replik. Jag har undvikit det symmetriska, matematiska i den franska konstruerade dialogen och låtit hjärnorna arbeta oregelbundet, såsom de göra i verkligheten, där i ett samtal ju intet ämne tömmes i botten, utan den ena hjärnan av den andra får en kugg på måfå att gripa in i. Och därför irrar också dialogen, förser sig i de första scenerna med ett material som sedan bearbetas, tages upp, repeteras, utvikes, lägges på, såsom temat i en musikkomposition.<sup>14</sup>

On the one hand, Strindberg indicates that he is trying to build up a dialogue on the basis of conversations in actual life, conversations in which there is considerable wandering as regards subject matter. On the other hand, however, he is pointing to a specific order, that of musical composition. This is a contradiction, for if Strindberg has actually "låtit hjärnorna arbeta oregelbundet," he could secure only by rare chance the order created by the employment of a theme in a musical composition. Martin Lamm has remarked that Strindberg has scarcely lived up to his intentions.

Jag har redan i det föregående framhållit, att Strindbergs dialog i grunden ej är så fri från de 'konstruerade,' som han själv förmenar, att den tvärtom ofta driver det blixtnabba replikerandet till sin spets. Den obearbetade vardagsdialog, som Zola förordade och praktiserade och som senare naturalister, som exempelvis Granville Barker och Tchechoff, drivit till sin spets, var Strindberg både för otålig och för konstnärlig för att kunna tillämpa. . . . Det finnes i grunden ej många repliker i *Fröken Julie*, som kunna betraktas som överflödiga, och den irrande mållösheten är mer skenbar än verklig. Men dialogen rör sig betydligt mer med antydningar än i den tidigare dramatiken, personerna tala ofta

<sup>13</sup> *Roman expérimental* (Paris, 1890), p. 92.

<sup>14</sup> *Les romanciers naturalistes*, p. 375.

<sup>14</sup> XXIII, p. 108.

om ett, berusa sig i sina egna fraser, under det att man märker att deras tankar syssla med annat. Den Strindbergska dialogen ger på ett helt annat sätt än den Ibsenska ett spelrum åt det omedvetna och impulsiva.<sup>15</sup>

We do not have to say that it is doubtful that the language is as natural to the *dramatis personae* as Strindberg would have us believe; it is clear that he has painstakingly composed the dialogue. In other words, Strindberg did not derive the dialogue from notes taken on conversations in actual life. He theorized on the way people talk, made an analogy to musical composition, and then constructed the dialogue of *Fröken Julie*.

Jean's command of language, both Swedish and French, is the result of his association, through employment, with the people of polite society. Along with the vocabulary of his employers, Jean has also acquired some of their affectations. Thus, when Kristin offers him a bit of veal kidney, Jean smells of the food and says, "Skönt! Det är min stora délice."<sup>16</sup> Then he feels of the plate and complains that Kristin has not warmed it for him. The cook remarks that he is harder to please than the Count himself. Jean continues to demonstrate his affectations by refusing beer and providing himself with some of the Count's best wine. He insists on having the proper glass and then plays with the wine glass like a connoisseur, warming it with his hands.

In these passages, so early in the play, Strindberg has Jean acting for the benefit of the audience. The author is building up the servant so that he will be an acceptable companion for Julie, once the livery is removed and the frock coat is put on. In fact, Jean is actually playing up to Julie before the latter even appears on the stage. His conversations with Julie after the ballet are enough to warrant the judgment that in the early part of the drama Strindberg is employing artificial, not natural, speech. Thus, it does not strike us as too incongruous when Julie enters the kitchen and subsequently marches off to the dance with Jean. Nor again are we surprised when Jean, having been commanded to put on civilian clothes, appears in frock coat and bowler hat, for Strindberg has been conditioning us to accept

<sup>15</sup> *Strindbergs dramer*, Vol. I, pp. 320-321.

<sup>16</sup> XXIII, p. 119.

Jean's gentlemanly appearance. The following conversation then seems appropriate, despite the fact that a servant is talking with the mistress of the house.

Fröken. Tres gentil; monsieur Jean! Tres gentil!

Jean. Vous voulez plaisanter, madame!

Fröken. Et vous voulez parler français! Var har ni lärt det?

Jean. I Schweiz, medan jag var sommelier på ett av de största hotellen i Luzern!

Fröken. Men ni ser ju ut som en gentleman i den där redingoten! Charmant!<sup>17</sup>

Jean's statement that he had worked as a "sommelier" in Switzerland brings us back to earth momentarily—he is but a servant. Yet, immediately afterwards, Fröken Julie tells him that he looks like a gentleman. And that is the way he also appears to the audience.

This passage has an obvious purpose: it is to build up Jean so that he may seem plausible in the sex battle with Julie. Is it not rather remarkable that Julie has not earlier known that Jean speaks French, that he has been abroad, and that he looks like a gentleman when he wears a frock coat and bowler hat? Even if we argue that prior to this particular occasion Julie had been so busy with her own class of people that she had never noticed Jean, we still wonder why she chose to speak French to him if she thought he knew nothing of the language. While this passage tends to heighten the illusion of reality in making Jean an acceptable figure to play opposite Julie, it nevertheless does not bear the hallmark of actuality.

Just before the exchange of confidences with respect to their individual dreams, Jean and Julie are engaged in a conversation in which the former warns the latter about the attitude of the servants. Julie readily understands that the servants may think that she is "verliebt i betjänten," but she continues flirting with Jean. When the latter repeats his warnings, Julie chides him with being aristocratic. He replies in the affirmative, and then she says, "Jag stiger ner. . . ." Obviously she is lowering herself socially by being intimate with a servant, but this is not just an accidental conversation between the two. Strindberg is deliberately making preparations for the discussion of the dreams.<sup>18</sup> Julie dreams that she is high up on a pillar and feels that she

<sup>17</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 126.

<sup>18</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 132.

must get down; indeed, she even hopes to fall down. And she knows that if she gets down to the ground she will also want to creep down into the earth. This dream is easily recognized for its dramatic function: foreboding. Strindberg has introduced it for the purpose of preparing for the resolution of the situation.

This may be good theatre—I am raising no questions whatsoever of this nature—but it most assuredly is not a natural conversation of the hit-and-miss variety which Strindberg thinks occurs in actual life. It is a dialogue deliberately constructed by the author.

When Julie suggests that Jean is doubtless a Joseph, she is simply echoing material in *En dades försvarstal*. When Axel is first acquainted with Maria, there is a little exchange in which Axel refers to himself as "denne Josef."<sup>19</sup> Later on, not long before the so-called seduction scene, Axel decides that inasmuch as Maria has set out to seduce him, he will turn the tables by becoming the seducer himself, "ty jag är inte någon Josef trots mina hårdnackade grundsatser i hederssaker!"<sup>20</sup>

After the ballet scene we are reminded of Julie's dream when the girl "skriker i krampanfall: 'Och nu föraktar ni mig!—Jag faller, jag faller!'"<sup>21</sup> Jean replies that if she falls down to him he will lift her up again, reminding us likewise of his dream.<sup>22</sup> Julie then asks rhetorical questions: "Vilken förfärlig makt drog mig till er? Den svages till den starke? Den fallandes till den stigandes!"<sup>23</sup> We too may ask a question: Is not this part of the dialogue a patent Strindberg construction?

As we move into the battle of the sexes following the ballet scene, we encounter other instances in which the dialogue bears the imprint of Strindberg's imagination. Note, for example, the following passage:

Fröken (går fram och åter). Finns det någon människa på jorden i denna stund, som är så olycklig som jag!

Jean. Varför är ni det? Efter en sådan erövring? Tänk på Kristin därinne! Tror ni inte att hon också har känslor!

Fröken. Jag trodde det nyss, men jag tror det inte mer! Nej, dräng är dräng. . . .

Jean. Och hora är hora!

<sup>19</sup> XXVI, p. 54.

<sup>20</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 168.

<sup>21</sup> XXIII, p. 149.

<sup>22</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 132–133.

<sup>23</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 149.



Fröken (på knä med knäppta händer). O, Gud i himmelen, gör slut på mitt eländiga liv! Tag mig bort från denna smuts, som jag sjunker i! Rädda mig! Rädda mig!<sup>24</sup>

Miss Julie is certainly posing with her complaints and her prayer. Indeed, she is forced to do just what Strindberg decried as a fault among actors—she plays to the audience instead of for it.<sup>25</sup> It is true that scholars may not be accurate judges of the speech and actions of a young woman under the circumstances given in this drama, but they usually have seen enough of stage plays and of actual life to make some distinction between the artificial and the natural. Personally, I cannot conceive as natural to the circumstances either the first or the last speech of Julie as quoted above. They are speeches meant to be sounded in a large room, the auditorium of a theatre, rather than in a kitchen; they are, moreover, supposed to create emotional excitement in the audience.

Later on, we hear Strindberg's voice quite clearly. Julie has commanded Jean, as a lackey in her employ, to stand up when she talks. Jean now finds that he can say "du" to Julie, earlier inhibitions notwithstanding. He speaks, however, with his author's tongue.

Domestik-frilla, lakej-slinka, håll mun och gå ut härifrån. Skall du komma och förehålla mig att jag är rå? Så rätt som du uppfört dig i afton har aldrig någon av mina vederlikar uppfört sig. Tror du att någon piga antastar manfolk som du? Har du sett någon flicka av min klass bjuda ut sig på det sättet? Sådant har jag bara sett bland djur och fallna kvinnor!<sup>26</sup>

Martin Lamm, in discussing Jean, says that "de våldsamt råa cynismer, som han lägger i dennes mun, erinra i vida högre grad om Strindbergs vokabulär än om en grevlig lakejs, som säkert lärt sig sovra sitt ordförråd."<sup>27</sup> There can be no disagreement with that opinion.

We might expect to find the best example of natural conversation in the dialogue involving Kristin. Yet there are indications that she too, as a subordinate figure, is just a foil for the other figures or a device to enable Strindberg to communicate something to the audience. Very early in the drama,

<sup>24</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 151.

<sup>25</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 113.

<sup>26</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 153.

<sup>27</sup> *Strindbergs dramer*, Vol. I, p. 313.

when the conversation between Jean and Kristin is focussed on Julie's broken engagement, Jean says that he was present when the engagement was broken. Kristin dutifully asks her question, "Nej, såg han det?" and then Jean tells her what Strindberg wants the audience to know.

... De hölls på stallgård en afton och fröken tränade honom som hon kallade det—vet du hur det gick till? Jo, hon lät honom springa över ridspöet som en hund man lär hoppa. Han sprang två gånger och fick ett rapp för varje gång; men tredje gången tog han ridspöet ur handen på henne, bröt det i tusen bitar; och så försvann han.<sup>28</sup>

Kristin again makes the proper response: "Gick det till på det viset! Nej, vad han säger!" We know that the engagement was broken two weeks prior to the conversation between Kristin and Jean. We learn, somewhat later, that Kristin is Jean's mistress-fiancée and expects to marry him. Are we to believe that Jean during a period of two weeks remained completely silent about an engagement broken in such a sensational manner? I submit that it is straining credulity to expect us to believe that in actual life Jean would have said nothing about this scene in which the mistress of the household was deserted by her fiancé. Indeed, after the ballet scene, Jean takes no pains to conceal from Kristin what has happened; he cannot refrain from letting her know that he has humbled Julie.<sup>29</sup> He is certainly not the kind of man to wait two weeks before relaying a choice bit of household scandal to his mistress, the cook.

In general, I believe that two things would militate against the acceptance of the language of *Fröken Julie* as satisfactory to Zola's naturalism. First, the dialogue is too obviously constructed; it does not represent the natural flow of conversation. Second, the vocabulary of the figures tends far more toward Strindberg's than to that which we would normally expect from figures like Julie and Jean.

#### Setting

In the study of the drama we find the most immediate element of setting in the stage decorations and the clothes worn by the actors and actresses. Geographic phases of setting may

<sup>28</sup> XXXIII, p. 118.

<sup>29</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 168.

or may not be indicated, and the social aspect of the setting may be revealed in the dialogue of the dramatis personae or by extratextual means. Strindberg was fully aware of the great value of the setting that could be seen immediately, in contrast to that which could only be indicated. In fact, in the *Foreword* to *Fröken Julie* he discusses almost exclusively stage properties, equipment, theatre design, and make-up.<sup>30</sup> First of all, he tells us that he has borrowed the asymmetrical design from the impressionistic painters. Instead of having a complete room squarely in front of them, the spectators will see only part of a room with a wall running obliquely across the stage. In this fashion Strindberg expects to stimulate the imagination of the audience. He also avoids the traditional exits through swaying doors of stage scenery.

On this kind of stage Strindberg hopes that the dramatis personae and milieu will grow together by virtue of there being a single setting for the entire drama. By milieu he obviously means the physical setting on the stage, and he wants that setting to be as real as possible. In view of the fact that so much of the stage is artificial, Strindberg feels that the least he can demand is that the saucepans in his kitchen be real instead of being painted on the wall. Indeed, with but one setting there should be a reduction in expenses, and the author may then demand that this single setting be made as plausible as possible.

As to the matter of stage lighting, Strindberg would do away with the footlights, which have not only a disconcerting effect on the actors but also a tendency to make them appear unnatural. He would introduce side lights which would permit the full play of facial expression. Of course, this would make it essential that the female figures make themselves up to be lifelike rather than beautiful, and the males would have to avoid giving themselves a make-up indicative of a single, fixed characteristic. Indeed, Strindberg thinks that it would be advisable to have a minimum of make-up, or, if feasible, none at all.

The theatre should be so constructed that the stage and auditorium are both small. Strindberg would eliminate the visible orchestra, the lower orchestra seats, the boxes, and

<sup>30</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 111-114.

everything else that spoils the artistic illusion. He would maintain complete darkness throughout the performance.

Strindberg says that much of the equipment of the stage is artificial, and that it tends to produce artificiality in the drama. He desires, so he says, that which is plausible. Whether this is an utterance in behalf of the play *Fröken Julie* or a genuine wish on the part of the author is difficult to determine. At least, Strindberg recognizes that one of the hard battles in the theatre is the fight against conventions. No matter what an artist may wish to do, he still has to contend with the traditional theatre and its ways of doing things.

In analyzing *Fröken Julie* in terms of setting, we observe that Strindberg offers the following stage directions under the title of *Sceneri*:

Ett stort kök, vars tak och sidoväggar döljas av draperier och suffiter. Fondväggen drar sig snett inåt och uppåt scenen från vänster; på densamma till vänster två hyllor med koppar-, malm-, järn- och tennkärl; hyllorna äro garnrade med gaufererat papper; något till höger tre fjärdedelar av den stora välvda utgången med två glasdörrar, genom vilka synes en fontän med en amorin, syrenbuskar i blom och uppstickande pyramidpopplar.

Till vänster på scenen hörnet av en stor kakelspis med ett stycke av kappan. Till höger framskjuter ena ändan av tjänstefolkets matbord av vit furu med några stolar.

Spisen är klädd med björklövsruskor; golvet strött med enris.

På bordsändan en stor japansk kryddburk med blommande syrener.

Ett isskåp, ett diskbord, ett tvättställ.

En stor gammaldags ringklocka ovanför dörren och ett talrör mynnande på vänstra sidan om densamma.<sup>21</sup>

This is a description of stage layout and properties, nothing more. Evidently there are two exits, the large, arched exit with two glass doors leading to the outside, and a single door leading to other parts of the house.<sup>22</sup> The properties on the stage are real as far as pots and pans are concerned. The back wall running obliquely across the stage would arouse the curiosity of the theatregoer, whether or not it would tend to heighten the illusion of reality.

Inasmuch as the entire drama is enacted with this one setting in the large kitchen, it is clear that the illusion of reality will

<sup>21</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 117.

<sup>22</sup> Cf. *Ibid.*, pp. 131, 144, 166, 171, 176.

not be broken by the artificial curtain fall and change of scenes. Moreover, a scene laid in the kitchen tends to create an atmosphere of naturalness as opposed to the atmosphere of artificiality in the drawing room. As a result, members of the audience are unconsciously persuaded that this must be a naturalistic drama. Certainly the stage arrangement and appearance suggest that the audience will be in contact with something close to actuality.

Geographically we must assume that we are in Sweden. When, for example, Jean suggests flight, he mentions Malmö as the first stop on a journey to Italy.<sup>33</sup> We know that the kitchen is in a building on a count's estate, but just where the estate is located in Sweden we do not know. Strindberg apparently did not consider it necessary to provide an exact location for the setting.

As to the time of the action, it is "midsommarnatten," the night of June 23 and the morning of June 24.<sup>34</sup> Should we accept Strindberg's statement in the *Foreword* that the action of the drama was derived from an incident in life occurring a number of years earlier,<sup>35</sup> we should have to assume that the time is several years prior to 1888. This would satisfy Zola's specification for contemporaneity, although it would not satisfy the requirement for a definite time.

The relation between the time consumed by the presentation of *Fröken Julie* and the time indicated by the action is satisfactory, as regards the illusion of reality. Strindberg says that the drama should last for an hour and a half.<sup>36</sup> The actual time represented by the action of the drama is longer. The play opens with Jean's conversation with Kristin. Jean has returned to the estate after driving the Count to the railway station, and we may assume that he has taken part in one or two dances before entering the kitchen to talk with Kristin.<sup>37</sup> At the end of the drama the sun is shining in the kitchen and the Count has already returned to the estate and to his room.<sup>38</sup> He went away to spend the festive night with relatives,<sup>39</sup> and the two trips on the

<sup>33</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 146.

<sup>34</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 115, 119.

<sup>35</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 100.

<sup>36</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 109.

<sup>37</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 117.

<sup>38</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 171, 184, 186.

<sup>39</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 118.

train as well as going to the station and coming from it<sup>40</sup> required an amount of time sufficient for us to assume a period of from six to ten hours as that represented by the action of the play. Zola would readily have admitted such condensation of time as reasonable and perhaps as inevitable.

The drama opens in the dusk of Midsummer's Eve and closes in the sunshine of the next morning. It opens at the proper time for flirtatiousness, dreaminess, romance; and it closes at the proper time for awakening, disillusionment, drab reality. In the early part of the night, at the time of festivity, the kitchen floor is strewn with twigs of juniper, and there are birch branches in the room. After the ballet scene we are conscious of the emptied firkin and anker, the drinking glasses, and the general disorder. The pre-seduction scene is an invitation to festivity; the post-seduction scene is a ruin. The two phases patently symbolize Julie before and after the ballet scene.

In an analysis of the social phases of the drama, we think first of all of the occasion, Midsummer's Night. This is a time of rejoicing, with much eating, drinking, and dancing. It is the time that spring love reaches its zenith, and heads are temporarily turned. It is also the time of trolls and strange spirits of the northlands. Strindberg gives some weight to these notions when he has Julie say, "Har jag varit rusig, har jag gått i drömmen denna natt? Midsommarnatten!"<sup>41</sup> And still later, we note this conversation:

Fröken. . . . Å—det är solen som går opp!

Jean. Och då spricker trollet!

Fröken. Ja, det är trollen som varit ute i natt! . . . .<sup>42</sup>

Prior to the seduction Jean had said, "Vi ska sova på nio midsommarblomster i natt, så bli vi sanndrömmade! fröken!"<sup>43</sup> There is no question but that Strindberg has chosen a festive

<sup>40</sup> We note that Jean took the Count to the station but did not meet the train by which the Count returned. How the Count returned to the estate we do not know, but it would have been wholly disruptive of the action had Jean been forced to drive to the station after his master. The element of suspense—waiting for the Count's return—would have been completely destroyed.

<sup>41</sup> XXIII, p. 151.

<sup>42</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 172.

<sup>43</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 133. Cf. also *Nordisk Familjebok* (Stockholm, 1913), Vol. 18, p. 446.

occasion that lends plausibility to mutual seduction, and there is no reason why the ballet scene—a description of a Midsummer Eve's celebration—should not be reasonably authentic.

In our study of the setting of *Fröken Julie* we are, of course, vitally interested in other phases of the social backgrounds: political, economic, religious, moral, educational, domestic, and everything else that is pertinent. Politically little or nothing is revealed. The unseen Count is a member of the aristocracy and thus also a member of the ruling class of the country. Again, when Jean is talking about flight, Julie reminds him that there are no barriers between them anymore. But Jean insists that barriers exist.

... Det finns skrankor mellan oss ännu, så länge vi vistas i detta hus—det finns det förflutna, det finns greven—och jag har aldrig träffat någon person, som jag har sådan respekt för—jag behöver bara se hans handskar ligga på en stol, så känner jag mig liten—jag behöver bara höra klockan däröppa, så far jag ihop som en skygg häst—och när jag nu ser hans stövlar stå där så raka och kavata, så drar det i ryggen på mig! (Sparkar till stövlarna.) Vidskepelse, fördomar, som man har lärt oss från barndomen—men som man kan glömma lika lätt. Kom till ett annat land bara, där det är republik, och man står på näsan för min portiers livré—på näsan ska man stå, se! men jag ska det inte! Jag är inte född till att stå på näsan, för det finns stoff i mig, det finns karaktär, och bara jag får fatt i första grenen, ska ni se mig klättra! Jag är betjänt i dag, men nästa år är jag proprietär, om tio år är jag rentier, och sedan reser jag till Rumänien, låter dekorera mig, och kan—märk väl jag säger kan—sluta som greve!<sup>44</sup>

It is obvious that Jean regards the social position as one determined wholly by economic status. He has the ambitions of a climber.<sup>45</sup> He desires to go to a country with a republican form of government in order to get away from all the conditioning influences of his native land; yet his aim is to become like his master, the Count. Thus, we readily see that there is little or nothing of a direct political nature in the setting of *Fröken Julie*. Rather, it is marked strongly by the matter of social position.

The drama may, or may not, present an accurate delineation of the landed aristocracy of Sweden during the second half of the nineteenth century. In his *Foreword* Strindberg says that

<sup>44</sup> XXIII, pp. 146–147.

<sup>45</sup> Cf. A. Jolivet, *Le théâtre de Strindberg* (Paris, 1931), p. 171.

"Fröken Julie är även en rest från den gamla krigaradeln, som nu går undan för den nya nerv- eller stora-hjärn adeln. . . ."<sup>46</sup> Thus, we may assume that he set out to represent the old military nobility. At the same time, we must remember that the prime example of that social stratum, the Count, never appears in the drama; it is his family background that is betrayed by his loquacious daughter. With the large number of servants taking part in the ballet scene, we should consider the Count a well-to-do man. The contrary, however, seems to be the case. Julie tells Jean that after the fire which occurred at the estate, a fire started by Julie's mother, "Vi stodo på bar backe och måste sova i vagnarna." It was possible to rebuild only with money borrowed from the mother's lover.<sup>47</sup> In other words, the economic structure of this estate is rotten, despite the appearance of sufficiency and even of wealth.

The difference in the social strata is emphasized by the servants in the drama, Jean and Kristin. We have already seen that Jean is outraged by the rearing that has made him cringe even in the presence of the Count's boots. He cannot accept with good grace a position that makes him submit to the arbitrary will of those placed by accident of birth in the ruling class. Kristin, on the other hand, is the born servant. She feels superior to some of the other servants, for she cries out, "Jag har alltid haft så mycket aktning för mig själv . . . så att jag aldrig sänkt mig under mitt stånd. Kom och säg att grevens kokerska haft något med ryktarn eller svindrängen! Kom och säg det!"<sup>48</sup> At the same time, she cannot continue working for the Count when she learns that Julie, like Kristin herself, has had relations with Jean. She can exist in comfort only with the notion that there are "bättre folk" to whom one may look up. With that gone, her whole world crumbles.<sup>49</sup> Lamm looks upon Kristin as a figure that illustrates a phase of Swedish character.<sup>50</sup> In this respect, then, we may assume that part of the social setting is derived from actual observations, the part that is created by the presence of Kristin.

<sup>46</sup> XXIII, p. 105.

<sup>47</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 158-159.

<sup>48</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 180.

<sup>49</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 169.

<sup>50</sup> *Strindbergs dramer*, Vol. I, pp. 315-316.



The domestic institution receives some attention through Julie's depiction of her family background.<sup>51</sup> Whether this is an authentic picture derived from actual observations, or part of the prejudices of the author, may be a moot question. There is good reason for believing that the background of this man-hating Julie has been provided by Strindberg's own creative imagination. It is marked by the duplicities of the female, with the male more or less an innocent victim. The domestic scene in *Fröken Julie* is one that is typically Strindbergian: the unhappy home brought about by the incompatibility of the husband and wife, with the latter more at fault than the former.

Morally, we observe in this play that which we have noted in the novels of Zola; that is, no social stratum seems to be fundamentally different from the others. The differences are only superficial, for essentially people of all classes are much the same. Thus, when Julie says, "Inte lever vi som ni, när vi äro fästfolk," Jean answers boldly, "Är det säkert det?—Ja, för mig är det inte värt att fröken gör sig oskyldig. . . ."<sup>52</sup> And when Kristin is disturbed about working for such shameless people, Jean declares, "Ja, men det är ju en tröst för oss att de andra inte äro en bit bättre än vi!"<sup>53</sup> Strindberg has placed Julie and her mother, the late Countess, on a par with Kristin. The mother had a lover, and Julie and Kristin have had relations with the same man—Jean. Again, Kristin and Jean are guilty of little household thefts, but Julie's mother was an arsonist and her lover, a manufacturer, was a thief. Indeed, Julie herself stole from her father to provide funds for the proposed flight from Sweden.<sup>54</sup> Thus, for Strindberg as well as for Zola social stratum is no index to moral behavior.

The religious institution is also given scant treatment. In the *Foreword* Strindberg announces, "Skulden har naturalisten utstrukit med Gud. . . ."<sup>55</sup> This is not quite in harmony with Zola, whose primary concern was reliance on scientific fact. Thus, from Strindberg there is little to be expected by way of sympathetic treatment of religion. The attitude, indeed, is unchanged from that of the earlier drama *Fadren*, in which the

<sup>51</sup> XXIII, pp. 157-159.

<sup>52</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 140.

<sup>53</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 169.

<sup>54</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 172.

<sup>55</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 105.

Captain says to his old nurse, "Det är märkvärdigt, att bara du talar om gud och kärleken, blir din röst så hård och dina ögon så hatfulla."<sup>66</sup> There is no sign of religious charity in *Fröken Julie*. In a scene more artificial than plausible, a scene that may well be called theatrical, Julie in a fit of remorse kneels on the stage and prays for help.<sup>67</sup> Near the end of the drama, however, Julie declares that she will not put the blame on Jesus for what has happened to her; she knows that she herself will have to accept the responsibility and the consequences.<sup>68</sup> It is a declaration on her part against the traditional belief in the possibility of release from guilt for one's doings, or, perhaps it is Strindberg speaking through Julie. Again, Jean's religious belief consists of mere affirmation of belief in the existence of deity coupled with going to church regularly.<sup>69</sup> It is rather Kristin, who is guilty of fornication and of household thefts, whom Strindberg makes the mouthpiece of conventional religious expression. Kristin sins without pangs of conscience, for she is convinced that her faith automatically guarantees salvation.<sup>60</sup>

In brief résumé, we note that Strindberg pays much attention to stage properties and layout. Geographically, however, he is very indefinite; chronologically, not much less so. The most significant aspect of the social setting is that of class distinction, with the emphasis on the superficiality of the difference.

In conclusion, we should try to answer this question: As regards setting does *Fröken Julie* fulfil the specifications for naturalistic literature?

First of all, we must admit that the kitchen bears the imprint of actuality. As far as possible, Strindberg tried to reproduce on the stage the kitchen of a count's estate. At the same time, however, we must remember that naturalism is not established by locus alone or by actuality alone; it is established by an objective analysis of an actual setting which functions as a determining influence on the dramatis personae. The kitchen is only a part of the setting, and, from the standpoint of influence, it is relatively unimportant.

<sup>66</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 34.

<sup>67</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 151.

<sup>68</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 184.

<sup>69</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 162.

<sup>60</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 181-182.

Again, we observe that the ballet scene is doubtless authentic; so too, the depiction of a nineteenth-century type of servant in Kristin. Yet neither the ballet scene nor the servant is a determining influence in the actions of Julie and Jean. Strindberg has made no genuine study of social backgrounds, and thus he has failed to introduce the social setting as a significant force in the drama. There seems to be no possibility for any other conclusion but this: The setting, like other elements of *Fröken Julie*, owes too much to Strindberg's imagination to warrant the naturalistic qualification.

## SCANDINAVIAN SEAL LORE

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**A**N ICELANDIC tale of Jón Arnason's well-known and justly famous collection contains the following passage:<sup>1</sup>

A man of Myrdal, in passing by a cave one early morning, noticed music and dancing going on inside, while a number of seal skins were lying outside. He took one of these home, locking it in a chest. On passing again by the grotto, he beheld a pretty girl entirely without clothes and weeping bitterly. She was none other than the seal whose skin he had taken. He gallantly consoled her and took her to his house. Taking a liking to her, he subsequently married her, and they had many children; but she was often seen sitting near the window, looking yearningly out to sea. On going out, he was always careful to take with him the key of the chest, in which the seal skin lay safely locked up. One fatal day, however, he forgot the key and, returning home, found that his wife had disappeared: she had donned the skin and swum out to sea. Our farmer often noticed a seal swimming near his boat, and he always had luck in his fishing. His children, too, often saw the seal, who presented them with multicolored fish and seashells; but their mother never returned.

An Icelandic tradition has it that seals cannot assume human form at will: only on St. John's Eve are they allowed to take off their seal skins and to appear as human beings, when they make merry with men, singing and dancing in their company.<sup>2</sup> A similar belief is found in the Faroe islands, except that there it is not at Midsummer but at the Epiphany that they enjoy this privilege.<sup>3</sup> In the same archipelago variants of Arnason's story are current. One of these is virtually the same as the Icelandic.<sup>4</sup> In another there are some complications: The seal wife is married to a seal and has two children by him. One night she

<sup>1</sup> K. Maurer, *Isländische Volkssagen der Gegenwart*, Leipzig, 1860, p. 173; G. E. J. Powell and E. Magnússon, *Icelandic Legends*, London, 1866, Vol. II, p. xlv; M. Lehmann-Filhés, *Isländische Volkssagen*, Leipzig, 1889-1891, Vol. II, p. 16; A. Avenstrup and E. Treitel, *Isländische Märchen und Volkssagen*, Berlin, 1919, p. 258; Hans und Ida Naumann, *Isländische Volksmärchen*, Jena, 1923, pp. 130-131.

<sup>2</sup> Maurer, *op. cit.*, p. 172; Lehmann-Filhés, *loc. cit.*; W. Golther, *Handbuch der germanischen Mythologie*, Leipzig, 1895, pp. 149-150; Paul Herrmann, *Island in Vergangenheit und Gegenwart*, Leipzig, 1907, Vol. II, p. 175; Avenstrup-Treitel, *op. cit.*, p. 257; Naumann, *op. cit.*, p. 131.

<sup>3</sup> Naumann, *op. cit.*, p. 295; O. L. Jiriczek, *Zeitschrift d. Vereins f. Volkskunde*, Vol. II (1892), p. 15.

<sup>4</sup> J. M. Thiele, *Danske Folkesagn*, Vol. III (Copenhagen, 1820), pp. 51-52.

appears to her human husband in a dream, warning him, when he goes out to kill seals on the following day, to spare her family, of whose members she gives him an exact description. The dream is disregarded, and the offended seal woman pronounces a heavy curse upon the whole community.<sup>5</sup>

The motive of the fair partner in seal shape recurs in the Shetlands and Orkneys; witness the following story:<sup>6</sup>

A fisherman one day beholds two pretty girls disporting themselves on the sea-shore. At a short distance two seal skins are spread on the ground. As he takes up one of these to examine it, the two girls rush upon the spot; one of them seizes the skin he had left where he had found it, dons it, and plunges into the sea in the form of a seal. The other begs the fisherman to return to her her own. This he declines to do but takes her with him and marries her. In due course she gives birth to two children. The *denouement* is the same as in the Faroe and Icelandic tales: one day she finds the skin which he had carefully hidden, dons it, and disappears in the company of another seal.

A similar story seems to have been current in Scotland; for according to Marian Cox there has been exhibited before the Folk-Lore Society a photograph of an old Scotch woman who proudly claimed to be the granddaughter of a seal and who used to tell the tale of how her grandfather had captured and married a seal maid.<sup>7</sup>

From Scotland, too, hails the story of the fisherman who is drawn to the bottom of the sea in the shape of a seal and shown into a house inhabited by seals. There his guide hands him a knife, which he recognizes as his own and which he had lost when striking a seal which afterwards escaped. The guide shows him the wounded seal, who is, he declares, his father. The fisherman is then asked to bandage the wound with his own hands, and the wounded seal immediately recovers.<sup>8</sup> The seal then re-

<sup>5</sup> Jiriczek, *loc. cit.*; W. A. Craigie, *Scandinavian Folk-Lore*, London, 1896, pp. 231 ff.; Naumann, *op. cit.*, pp. 295 ff.

<sup>6</sup> P. Kennedy, *Legendary Fictions of the Irish Celts*, London, 1866, p. 122; E. Cosquin, *Contes populaires de Lorraine*, Paris [1886], Vol. II, p. 22, n. 2; F. J. Child, *The English and Scottish Popular Ballads*, Boston, 1883-1898, No. 113 (Vol. II, p. 494); cf. also Vol. III, p. 518; G. F. Black and N. M. Thomas, *Examples of Printed Folk-Lore Concerning the Orkney and Shetland Islands*, London, 1903, pp. 170 ff.; pp. 184-185.

<sup>7</sup> M. R. Cox, *An Introduction to Folk-Lore*, London, 1895, p. 101.

<sup>8</sup> This is of course the ancient theme of the lance of Achilles curing Telephus,

turns him to the surface of the water and to his own people, not however without having exacted a solemn promise from him to the effect that he will henceforth abstain from seal-hunting.<sup>9</sup>

The same tale was known already to Gervasius of Tilbury, who wrote in the thirteenth century. He, however, does not speak of a seal: A youth on board a ship wounds a dolphin, whereupon a terrible storm breaks loose. Then a horseman, whose steed was quietly walking on the waves, demands that the person of the evil-doer be delivered up to him. This demand is complied with, and the culprit is led to a place where he beholds a wounded knight, who is none other than the wounded dolphin. Having bandaged his wounds and restored him to health, he is safely conducted back to his ship.<sup>10</sup>

In an Irish story a king's son comes to a queer-looking empty house, in which he is invited to help himself to the food. Then three seals enter the hall, quietly throw off their transformation caps, and sit down to dinner. They are, however, of the male sex: handsome men, who present him with three marvelous gifts. Then they again don their caps and leave in the shape of seals.<sup>11</sup>

In a second Irish tale, from Clare Island, we are told how some men went seal-hunting and wounded three of the animals, which managed, however, to submerge and to escape. A severe storm then overtook the hunters, who found shelter on an island. In the house where they sought hospitality they found three men with terrible wounds in their backs, who made themselves known as the seals they had hunted. The men had to promise never to hunt seals again, and the storm fell.<sup>12</sup>

A third Irish story reads as follows:<sup>13</sup>

A seal-hunter is left marooned in a cave by a storm which obliges his com-

who had been wounded by that lance; cf. *Revue d'Ethnographie et des Traditions populaires*, Vol. VI (1926), pp. 432-435.

<sup>9</sup> Jacob und Wilhelm Grimm, *Irische Elfenmärchen*, München-Leipzig, [1906], pp. lxxiii-lxxxii; Th. Keightley, *The Fairy Mythology*, London, 1892, p. 394; L. Brueyre, *Contes populaires de la Grande-Bretagne*, Paris, 1875, p. 267.

<sup>10</sup> Ed. Leibniz (*Script. rer. Brunsv.*, Vol. I, p. 981); cf. Keightley, *op. cit.*, p. 467.

<sup>11</sup> W. Larminie, *West Irish Folk-Tales and Romances*, London, 1893, pp. 224-225.

<sup>12</sup> N. Colgan, *Proc. Royal Irish Academy*, Vol. XXXI (4) [1911-15], pp. 26-27.

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 27-28.

rades to make for home. As he lies hidden in a corner, he beholds a shoal of seals returning home, shedding their skins, and turning into men and women. Then they go to sleep, the men separately and the women separately. Our hero then seizes one of the women's seal-skins and hides it. As a result, the woman to whom it belongs is left behind the next day. He takes a liking to her, and they are married by the priest. In the course of a few years they have two children; but in the end she succeeds in laying hold of her seal-skin and swims off as a seal, leaving her children behind.

To these Irish stories we must add the curious tradition about the clan of the MacCodrums, said to have been metamorphosed into seals. They retained, along with an amphibious shape, the human soul and, at times, human form. They were, in fact, seals by day but human creatures at night. No MacCodrum, if in his proper senses, would think of firing a gun at a seal.<sup>14</sup>

So far our theme appears to be peculiar to the countries bordering on the Atlantic. There is, however, some evidence to show that it was known also in the Baltic. Thus, Ernst Moritz Arndt knew a tradition according to which nixes leave their moist abode and come to the surface in the shape of seals. But if they lose their seal-skins, they are obliged to stay on earth. They may conclude marriages with human beings; but the offspring of such unions is characterized by a thin membrane between the fingers and a certain resemblance of the wrists to the corresponding part of the forepaws of a seal.<sup>15</sup> It is clear, at all events, that it was the belief in the human nature of seals which attracted the swanmaiden type of story, which is known to have originated in India and to have been diffused over a large part of the Old World.<sup>16</sup>

We have already seen that the metamorphosis story is not necessarily attached to the seal: Gervasius of Tilbury speaks of a dolphin. Still more curious is the tale related by an ancient Egyptian text of uncertain date and translated by A. Wiedemann,<sup>17</sup> reporting how the enemies of Ra, the great Egyptian

<sup>14</sup> Alexander Nicolson, *A Collection of Gaelic Proverbs and Familiar Phrases Based on Macintosh's Collection*, Edinburgh, 1882, p. 150.

<sup>15</sup> Kurt Heckscher, *Die Volkskunde des germanischen Kulturkreises*, Hamburg, 1925, p. 86.

<sup>16</sup> Helge Holmström, *Studier över Svanjungfrumotivet i Volundarquiða och annorstädes*, Malmö, 1919. It is to be noted that the 'seal-maiden type' (as it may be called) is found also in the Baltic; cf. *Folk-Lore*, Vol. XLV (1934), p. 72.

<sup>17</sup> A. Wiedemann, *Religion of the Ancient Egyptians*, London, 1897, p. 70.

sun god, took refuge in the water (i.e., the Nile) and were promptly transformed into crocodiles and hippopotami.

We cannot be certain as to the identity of these "enemies of Ra"; but there can be little doubt that they were enemies of the Egyptians<sup>17a</sup>: the enemies of one's own social group are usually also the enemies of God. This Egyptian story was too good to be lost to non-Egyptians, and it seems to have gained some currency in the Eastern Mediterranean, though no text seems to have come down to us. What justifies our conclusion none the less is the fact that in the Baltic we find certain curious traditions which deserve some discussion. The Livonians call seals "Children of Pharaoh," and say that they are the men of Pharaoh's army drowned in the Red Sea when they pursued Moses and the fugitive Israelites. A similar tradition is found among the Letts, Estonians, and Finns.<sup>18</sup> The Lapps, figuratively, call the seal "Pharaoh's Daughter." In Iceland, Pharaoh's soldiers are said to have been transformed into seals and the army dogs into grossbeaks (a sea-bird). At Midsummer Night and Twelfth Night they come ashore in human form to dance and sing.<sup>19</sup>

We thus have the following curious situation: on the one hand, there is an ancient Egyptian tale relating how Ra's (i.e., Pharaoh's) enemies are transformed into animals living in the Nile; on the other, we have a considerable number of North European variants presupposing a common archetype, in which Pharaoh's soldiers are transformed into seals. The "missing link" seems to be some rabbinical story, based on the ancient Egyptian text, but reversing it, as it were: instead of Ra metamorphosing the enemies of the Egyptians, it was Jahveh who transformed the Egyptians, thus avenging his people on their persecutors. Like many Jewish narratives, those of the Solomon cycle, for example, this story appears to have reached Byzantium and to have spread thence northward to the Baltic and to Scandinavia, carried thither, presumably, by returning members of the imperial guard.

<sup>17a</sup> In the period of the Ptolemies the Egyptians considered themselves as the only true people; all other peoples were descended from enemies of the gods. Cf. Wiedemann, *Herodots Zweites Buch*, Leipzig, 1890, p. 43.

<sup>18</sup> O. Loorits, *Folk-Lore*, Vol. XLV (1934), pp. 68 ff.

<sup>19</sup> O. Dähnhardt, *Natursagen*, Leipzig-Berlin, 1907-1913, Vol. I, p. 318.



At all events, no great effort was required on the part of the Byzantines when they adopted and transmitted the hypothetical Jewish story. In Homeric and pre-Homeric times the Greeks had been quite familiar with such fancies. In the *Odyssey* (IV. 456 ff.) Proteus is referred to as the lord of seals and in the original legend was presumably caught in the shape of a seal.<sup>20</sup> The nereid Psamathe, the mother of Phokos, transforms herself into a seal to escape the pursuits of Aiaikos. According to Euripides (*Hel.* 7), Psamathe, whose name means 'sea-sand,' is also the wife of Proteus, the lord of seals. Phokos is a half-brother of Peleus, who is the husband of the nereid Thetis.<sup>21</sup> From these facts the conclusion has been drawn that the Greeks were familiar with the concept of a divine seal which, like all divine animals, could assume human shape at will.

The question arises whether these fancies, like the Egyptian metamorphosis story referred to above, originated in the Mediterranean, to be transmitted to the dwellers of the Atlantic shores. I frankly see no necessity for such an assumption. Sealing was an industry equally important in the Mediterranean<sup>22</sup> and in the Atlantic. Quite naturally, a good deal of folk-lore then began to cluster around the useful animal on which the lives of the fishermen and their families so largely depended.

The available evidence would probably not suffice to prove that Phokos was the totemic ancestor of the Phocians. Nor is the Irish tale of the MacCodrums as satisfactory as would be desirable, to establish the existence of a seal clan by that name. There is, however, more to the matter. A Connacht tribe, the Clanna Coneely (from *coneely* 'seal') abstained from eating seal, on the plea that according to an ancient tradition the forebears of the tribe had been turned into seals.<sup>23</sup> Here the metamorphosis story, combined with a food taboo and the tribal name, clearly points to the former existence of a 'seal clan,' whose totem was the seal. If we further assume (as we probably may)

<sup>20</sup> A. Klenz, *Ἱερός Γάμος*, Halle, 1933, p. 64.

<sup>21</sup> O. Kern, "Der Robbengott Phokos," *Archiv f. Religionswissenschaft*, Vol. X (1907), pp. 82-87.

<sup>22</sup> Victor Bérard, *Les Phéniciens et l'Odyssee*, Paris, 1902-1903, Vol. II, pp. 62-63.

<sup>23</sup> P. W. Joyce, *A Social History of Ancient Ireland*, New York, 1903, Vol. II, p. 129.

that the Irish and Scottish Celts preceded the Scandinavians in the hunting grounds of the North Atlantic, it would seem likely that the Icelandic and Faroe traditions regarding seals (exception being made for the story of the Egyptians transformed into seals) were transmitted to the Scandinavians by people of Celtic speech.

If the seal was (and is) a rather important game for the dwellers of the European shores of the Atlantic, it is even more so for the Eskimos of Greenland. We should therefore expect the animal to loom at least as large in Eskimo folk-lore. Now, it is a well-ascertained fact that the Eskimos, too, believe in the ability of seals to assume human shape. They think, for example, that if too many seals are caught in one place they take bitter revenge: they transform themselves into men and fall upon their enemy at night in his own home.<sup>24</sup> The question arises: Did this belief and related traditions reach the Eskimos through the intermediacy of the Scandinavian colonists settled in Greenland in the Middle Ages?

Again we must admit that the evidence is insufficient. We have seen above that in an Egyptian story Ra transforms his enemies into crocodiles and hippopotami. Certain Toradjas (in Celebes) imagine that crocodiles are able to come ashore, to shed their crocodile 'garment,' and to assume human shape.<sup>25</sup> If one manages to burn the crocodile skin, the crocodile must remain ashore, marries, and has offspring, and these children have the power to entice crocodiles out of the water.<sup>26</sup> In other words, the Eskimo traditions share with the Scandinavian and Celtic ones only those features which they also have in common with a story pattern known even in the tropics, except that the place of the seal is taken by some other game animal. That both in Greenland and Europe these traditions should be attached to the seal is sufficiently explained by the equally great importance of this game animal on both sides of the Atlantic, and no further conclusion can be safely drawn from the coincidence.

<sup>24</sup> R. Andree, *Ethnographische Parallelen und Vergleiche*, Stuttgart, 1878, p. 77.

<sup>25</sup> L. Lévy-Bruhl, *The 'Soul' of the Primitive*, London [1928], p. 41.

<sup>26</sup> *Ibid.*

## KING ALFRED'S HÁLGOLAND AND OLD NORWEGIAN SYNCOPE

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IN ALFRED the Great's version of Paulus Orosius' *Historia adversum Paganos* there occurs in the famous supplementary account of the voyages of the Norwegian Óttarr (OE *Óthhere*) a statement concerning the latter's home district: *sto sc̅tr h̅atte H̅algoland*, "that district is called Helgeland."<sup>1</sup> This old regional name is Old Norwegian and Old Icelandic *Hálogaland*,<sup>2</sup> Modern Norwegian and Continental Scandinavian *Helgeland*<sup>3</sup>; the Modern Icelandic is *Hálogaland*, with the related adj. *háleygskur*.<sup>4</sup>

Now, alongside of ON *Hálogaland*<sup>5</sup> one finds already in medieval times the syncopated by-form *H̅algaland*,<sup>6</sup> later yielding *Helgeland*. This syncope of an unstressed medial vowel is thought to be relatively late, perhaps not occurring much before

<sup>1</sup> Ed. Henry Sweet, *King Alfred's Orosius* (EETS., Orig. Ser., No. 79, 1883), I, 19, l. 9, and included in practically all OE primers; Óttarr himself is mentioned by E. H. Lind, *Norsk-isländska Dopnamn* (Uppsala, 1905-1915), col. 825.

<sup>2</sup> Corresponding approximately to the modern Nordland district. For a collection of forms and spellings see Esther M. Metzenthin, *Die Länder- u. Völkernamen im altisländischen* [i.e., *altnordischen*] *Schriftum* (Bryn Mawr, Penn., 1941), pp. 39-40, where see also related ethnic names and adjectives.

<sup>3</sup> Generally familiar through Ibsen's historical drama *Harmandene på Helgeland* ("The Vikings at [sic!] Helgeland" of William Archer's standard English translation).

<sup>4</sup> Cf. the Icelandic translation of Ibsen's play by E. Ó. Brim and Indriði Einarsson: *Vikingarnir á Hálogalandi* (Reykjavík, 1892), in which the adj. form is also used.

<sup>5</sup> *Háloga-* no doubt represents a petrified gen. pl. of the ethnic name *Háleyg-* without *i*-mutation; see A. Noreen, *Altisländische und altnorwegische Grammatik* (4th ed., Halle, 1923), §392, *ad init.*; it is hard not to associate this ethnic name with that of the Lugians of Tacitus and Strabo (see R. Much, *Die Germania des Tacitus* [Heidelberg, 1937], p. 378, and *idem* in Hoops' *Reallexikon* under "Lugier"); *Há-* "high" would perhaps be an honorific epithet. Snorri's eponymus *Hǫlgi* is, of course, legendary (*Edda—Skáldskaparmál* §42, [45], ed. F. Jónsson, p. 110); for earlier discussion of Snorri's etymology see Ernst Wilken's ed., *Glossar*, s.v. *Hǫlgi*.

<sup>6</sup> See Adolf Noreen, *Geschichte der nordischen Sprachen* (3d ed., Strassburg, 1913), §116; *Altisländische und altnorwegische Grammatik*<sup>4</sup>, §160, Anm.

1300 (cp. Noreen, *Gesch.*, *loc. cit.*), but if *Hálgoland* in Alfred's *Orosius* is genuine, we must think of the phenomenon as starting at least as early as *ca.* 890, when Alfred may be supposed to have received Öttarr's report.<sup>7</sup> The Alfredian spelling may, it is true, be distorted<sup>8</sup> and hence only accidentally correspond to the syncopated form of later Scandinavian record. Thus, while it certainly cannot be viewed as conclusive evidence on which to redate this syncope, it should, however, probably be given as respectful consideration as are certain other OE forms (borrowings) of Scandinavian names, e.g., mid-tenth-century OE *Anláf* for later *Ólafr*, the Beowulfian *Onela* for OSwed. *Ale* (Icel. *Áli*), and the Scandinavian (apparently never native) name *Óðhere* of, for example, *Beowulf* (*ca.* 800) and the present passage, *vs.* Öttarr. In connection with the phonological point involved in this latter name, *viz.*, the assimilation of *ht* to *tt*, it may be pointed out that this regressive assimilation is ordinarily dated a little before 900, yet if one accepts the reading *sol* of the Eggjum rune-stone as standing for *sótt* < \**sōht*, the beginnings of the phenomenon must be put back (in Norway, at least) some two hundred years.<sup>9</sup> This may also be the case with OE *Hálgoland*.

<sup>7</sup> Cf. Charles Plummer, *The Life and Times of Alfred the Great* (Oxford, 1902), p. 157 and n. 2; R. H. Hodgkin, *A History of the Anglo-Saxons* (2d ed., Oxford, 1939), Vol. II, p. 629.

<sup>8</sup> By scribal error or by some popular adaptation of the Norwegian regional names to OE place names in *hālg-*, inflected forms of *hālig*, adj. (see Eilert Ekwall, *Dict. Engl. Place-Names*, 2d ed., Oxford, 1940, p. 202, col. 1, *s.v.* OE *hālig*), though this latter possibility strikes me as remote, since it is unlikely that this Norwegian name was at that time well enough known in England to have suffered popular treatment.

<sup>9</sup> See Alexander Jóhannesson, *Grammatik der urnordischen Inschriften* (Heidelberg, 1923), pp. 82, 85, and Noreen, *Altisländische und altnorwegische Grammatik*, §267, *ad init.*; for apparently later survivals of *ht*, even in the very name *Oktar*, in OSwed., see Noreen, *Altischwedische Grammatik*<sup>4</sup> (Halle, 1904), §233, Anm. 2.

